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student loan forgiveness programs to attract students to teach in shortage areas or in needy school districts include Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. It says at least 27 states have scholarship or loan forgiveness programs for prospective teachers, and these are not even tied to a certification process. They are just simply really bounties, I suppose you could say, on teachers. It also talks about North Carolina, which is probably a state a little bit more comparable to Nebraska, and it says that in the last two years North Carolina has jumped from being ranked 43rd for teacher salaries to 29th. This is due in large part to Governor Jim Hunt's Excellent Schools Act, which is a four-year plan to bring North Carolina's teacher salaries to the national average. Texas, where the teacher shortage is especially acute, has similarly encouraged teachers to remain in the profession with perhaps the nation's largest across-the-board pay raise for teachers, and that was a \$3,000 raise approved by the Legislature last year, and I think some other states have followed suit. I think the point is that this is not a state of Nebraska problem, this is a national problem and other states are beginning to address this national problem. And as...I think it was Senator Brashear said long ago, in the course of the debate, that we can do a study, we're probably already behind, we probably should have already done the study, and we'll be behind some of these other states in figuring out how to keep and attract teachers in our state. So I suppose we could all come up with facts and figures and states and examples, Senator Tyson, but I just wanted to illustrate that many states, many states are doing something about the teacher shortage right now. And I think Senator Thompson's proposal is a rather modest proposal and I hope that we don't change that.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Schimek. Senator Redfield, on the Chambers amendment to the committee amendment. Senator Redfield.

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Senator Cudaback, members of the body. I am going to support the amendment and the reason I am is that I see that we could encourage more teachers to participate in this program. I am familiar with the program and, Senator Chambers, I think that probably your goals would